

As a member of the Board of Directors for National Public Radio—the president of Kent State University, which holds the license for public radio station WKSU-FM—and a longtime public radio listener and member, I have a professional as well as a personal interest in doing my part to ensure the future of public broadcasting. By developing Tomorrow Radio (the Supplemental Audio Channel or “SAC”), I believe we have an opportunity to do just that.

SAC technology has the potential to enhance radio with CD-quality sound and reception that is free from static and other interfering noises. When fully developed, SAC technology will also transform radio by allowing for multiple channels of audio programming. Two distinct program channels, offered simultaneously, will increase the reach as well as the depth of the public service that public radio provides to citizens throughout the country. The FCC’s goal of fostering and protecting public service programming—and National Public Radio’s mission of serving the public—will both be more fully realized when the SAC is developed and put to use.

On a regional level, the SAC will support WKSU as our Kent State public radio station serves the diverse citizens of Northeast and Northcentral Ohio. WKSU is the largest FM radio station in Ohio, reaching more than 4 million people with its dual format of news and classical music. When WKSU gains the ability to offer news on one channel of programming and music on the other, the people who reside within WKSU’s broadcast range will be able to choose expanded news or music programming. In addition, WKSU will have the flexibility that it needs to add more local, diverse programming that improves our station’s overall offerings to the communities that the station serves.

It is clear that the Supplemental Audio Channel will better serve the citizens who live and work in communities throughout our nation; however, support from the FCC is critically important to developing the potential of this important technology.

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